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Common Mistakes in Chinese Stroke Writing Among Non-Chinese Learners

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Abstract

The learning of stroke writing is a complicated process yet it is viewed as a fundamental element in Chinese language learning. This has brought great challenges to many learners especially non-native learners. This study aims to identify the types of stroke writing mistakes and the frequency of making the mistakes among the non-native learners. A dictation of 68 words was given to all 50 Foundation Mandarin level 2 Diploma students from Faculty of Business Administration. The words were extracted from their stroke writing exercises in the course's text book. Data suggested that Stroke Misalignment, Stroke's Shape and Non-existing Strokes are prominent mistakes done by the learners. The findings of the study recommend that stroke order might be one of the most impactful component to minimize stroke mistakes among the non-native learners. However, further studies need to be done to investigate the teaching methods that can deliver such component effectively.

Keywords: Chinese character stroke writing, Mistakes in Chinese stroke writing, Non-native Chinese learners, Chinese character stroke order, Learning strategies for stroke writing.

1. Introduction

The interest of learning Chinese language is dramatically increasing due to the needs of the global economy particularly with the continuous attention to penetrate the Chinese market. However, the learning of Chinese language would turn off most aspiring learners especially the non-native Chinese language learners. Many studies revealed that learning Chinese language is tough (Liu, 2014) and learners may need more time to learn the language (Freed 1995; Coleman, 1997). This is mainly due to its writing system which may seem to be complicated to most of the non-native learners. This study investigated the types of Chinese character stroke writing mistakes and the frequency of making the mistakes by the non-native learners in a Chinese course offered by Universiti Teknologi MARA in Sarawak, Malaysia.